GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2663
ANSWERED ON:15.12.2015
Air Pollution
Prabakaran Shri K.R.P.

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that rapid deforestation and decline in tree cover has contributed to air pollution in the country; and;
(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government thereon?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) & (b) Ministry has not conducted any study to establish that rapid deforestation and decline in tree cover has contributed to air pollution in the country. However, as per India State of Forest Report-2015, the forest cover and tree cover of the country has increased by 3775 square kilometres and 1306 square kilometre respectively as compared to 2013 assessment. To increase the percentage of land under forests in the country, afforestation programmes are taken up under various schemes such as National Afforestation Programme, Green India Mission, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, Integrated Watershed Management Programme (which from 2015-16 has been amalgamated as the Watershed Development Component of the "Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana"), National Bamboo Mission, Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA), State Plan/ Non-Plan Schemes and Externally Aided Projects. National Afforestation Programme of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for afforestation, tree plantation and eco-restoration of degraded forests and adjoining areas in the country. Since inception of this programme an amount of 3545 crore has been invested to treat an area of 20.99 lakh hectare till 2014-15. Further, the Green India Mission aims at increasing the forest/ tree cover by 5 million hectare as well as, increasing the quality of the existing forest cover in another 5 million hectare.

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